

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

You are welcomed & loved by St Anthony's Community. We are transformed through prayer, acts of love, forgiveness, service & stewardship.



PARISH OFFICE: ... 978.685.7233 ... FAX: 978-688-4475 ... rectory@stanthonylawrence.org

OFFICE HOURS

M-TH 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

FRI 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

SAT By Appointment

MEET OUR PRIESTS:

Fr. Elie Mikhael ... **305-807-9087**

... pastor@stanthonylawrence.org

Fr. Edgard (Neemtallah) Oneissy
857-390-4838

... pv@stanthonylawrence.org

MEET OUR DEACONS:

Deacons: Nadim B. Daou,

James T. Demers & David Leard

Sub-Deacons: Antoine Nammour



DAILY LITURGIES 9am

MON & WED (Arabic)

TUE & THU (English)

WEEKEND LITURGIES

SAT 4:00PM(English)

SUN

8:00AM (Arabic)

9:00AM (English)

11:00AM (English & Arabic)

Holy days of obligation:

Vigil Liturgy @ 7:00 PM



SaintAnthonyLawrence



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https://members.myeoffering.com/#/landing?church_id=72

SACRAMENTS

Baptism & Confirmation: 1 month in advance with the Pastor, **Donations:** Church: \$200 - Priest: Free Will

Matrimony: Arrangements should be made by couples six months prior to the wedding date

Donations: Church \$500—Priest: Free Will

Reconciliation: One hour Before Thursday & Saturday Liturgies, or by appointment

Anointing of the Sick: Please notify the Rectory if a member of your family is ill, hospitalized, or unable to come to Church and would like to receive communion at home

Please refer to our website for more Sacrament Celebrations Guidelines.

LITURGIES

Sunday of the Announcement to Zechariah

أحد بشارة زكريا

ANNOUNCEMENT TO ZECHARIAH

Saturday, November 12, 2022 *St. Theodore*

4:00 pm For: Deceased and Living Veteran's of our Community.

Sunday, November 13, 2022 *St. John Chrysostom*

8:00 am For: In Honor of Mounir & Najat Rizkallah's Children & their families.

9:00 am For: +Private Intentions.

11:00 am For: +George, Helen, & Zeidan Ata
By the Family.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO VIRGIN MARY

Saturday, November 19, 2022 *Pope St. Pontian*

4:00 pm For: In Honor of the Children and families of *Najat & Mounir Rizkallah.*

Sunday, November 20, 2022 *St. Gregory*

8:00 am For: Private Intentions.

9:00 am For: +Jennie & Toufi Ferris *By their children & their Families.*

11:00 am For: +Jean El Helou, *By his son Tony, daughter, Lola Ata, their spouses and their Families.*

WEEKDAY LITURGIES

Monday, November 14 (Ar.) *St. Philip*

Rom 4:1-12 / Jn 8:31-37

9am For: +Angele & Nadia Abdel-Hay,
By Mr. & Mrs. Beshara Sfeir.

Tuesday, November 15 (En.)

Rom 2:1-8 / Jn 8:38-40

9am For: +Souls in Purgatory *By Dora Pereira.*

Wednesday, November 16 (Ar.)

St Matthew

Rom 2:9-16/ Jn 8:41-45

9am For: +Souad, Hanna & Andre Abi
Awad By Fr Elie

Thursday, November 17 (En.) *St Gregory*

Rom 2:17-29/Jn 8:46-50

9am For: Private Intentions

9:30am -12 noon *Eucharistic Adoration*

Friday, November 18—No Liturgy

St Raymond

SECOND COLLECTIONS

Maronite Patriarchal Charities
November 12 & 13

Sanctuary Lamps

In Loving Memory of
George C. Maroun,
By his wife, Edith, & Family.



PLEASE NOTE:

40 Day Liturgies are considered a priority. When necessary, they will be scheduled with other previously reserved intentions.

Christmas at Saint Anthony's

Saint Anthony's Parish
The Annual Men's Christmas Party
Presented By
Parish Council & Knights of Columbus
Tuesday, December 13
7:00pm-10:00pm
\$50.00
Michael Restaurant
12 Alpha St, Haverhill, MA 01832
www.stanthonylawrence.org/upcoming-events-2/

WEEKLY ENVELOPE SYSTEM- Preparing for the New Year

Have you changed your address? Are you a new member or current member interested in being a part of our envelope system? Prefer to donate online and dislike wasting the paper envelopes? We can fix that!

As we approach the last few months of 2022, please be sure to update your records with the Parish office. Call or e-mail us at your earliest convenience and let us know!



Support Saint Anthony's Church while you shop this Holiday Season!

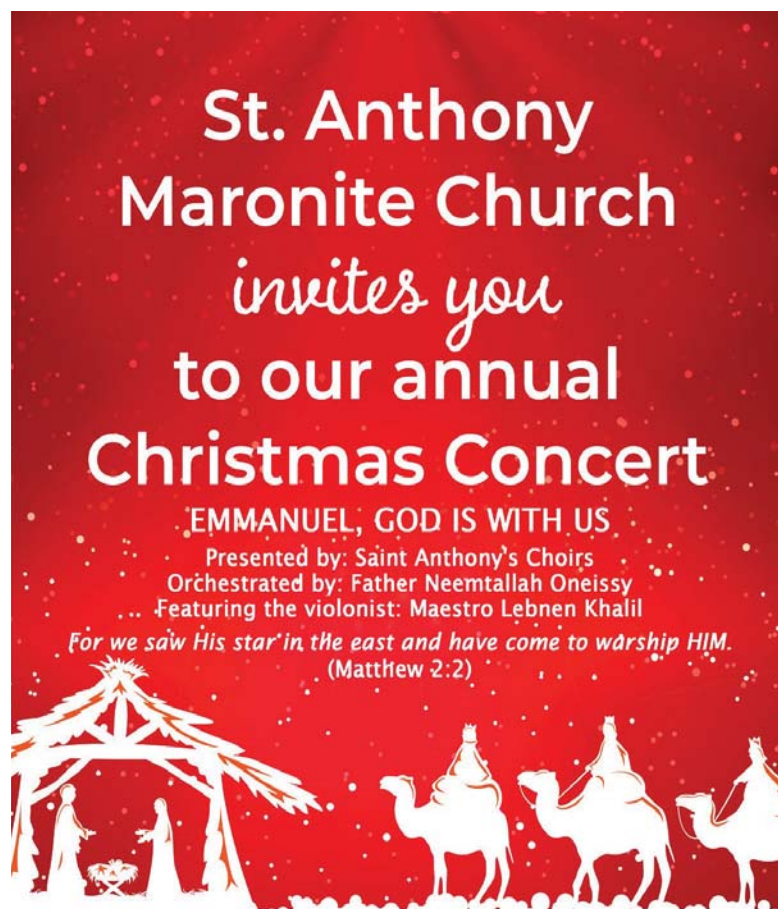
Visit smile.amazon.com/change, or tap "AmazonSmile" within the Settings menu in the Amazon Shopping app on your phone and select "Change your charity". Search and Select:

Saint Anthony Maronite
Catholic Church, Lawrence, MA

CLERGY DAY OFF

Fr Elie: **Mondays**

Fr. Neemtallah's : **Wednesdays**



DECEMBER 17, 2022 | 7 P.M.

ST. ANTHONY CHURCH, 145 AMESBURY ST, LAWRENCE, MA

Please join us for a light dinner in the church hall following the concert.

English Bible Study- November 17

Thursdays 7-8:30 pm

With Deacon Jim Demers

& Deacon David Leard

Arabic Bible Study-November 22

Tuesdays 6-7pm

with Fr. Neemtallah

KNIGHTS OF MARY

Bi Weekly from 5-7PM

Regular Session, November 19, 2022

Regular Session, December 3, 2022

Full Calendar:

www.stanthonylawrence.org/events-2/

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Upcoming Classes:

November 12 5PM-6:30 PM

December 10 5PM-6:30 PM

Full Calendar: www.stanthonylawrence.org/calendar-classes-and-events/

We are in need of substitute teachers!!!

If you would like more information please contact us at lawrencereligioused@gmail.com

-Religious Education Team

Knights of the Altar 2022-2023

Full Altar Server Schedule can be found:

<https://www.stanthonylawrence.org/kinghts-of-the-altar-calendar/>

LOL BIBLE CAMP 2023

Save the dates - July 12 -15, 2023

THE SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

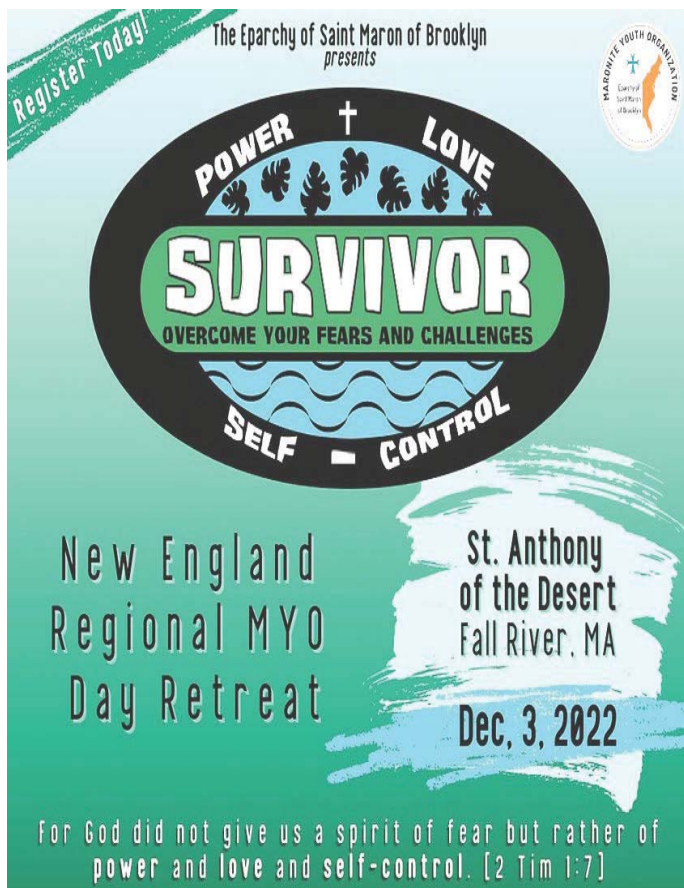
As we approach the holiday's we ask you to inform us of any loved ones who are sick or shut in. Call or email the Rectory today with their information so we can add them to our visits!

Saint Anthony's Basketball Team members will be looking good in their new jerseys this year thanks to the generosity and great work of Alyce Sader! Our appreciation to Alyce for the kindness she has shown in printing and donating the jerseys for our boys and girls this year! Thank you for getting them off to a great season!

Maronite Youth Organization - MYO

Sunday, November 20 - Community Service

Full Calendar: www.stanthonylawrence.org/myo/



REGISTER

<https://www.myoeparchystmaron.org/event-details/new-england-regional-myo-day-retreat/form>



Maronite Young Adults - MYA

MYA Registration is open to new members,
Ages 18-35
Contact Ramona for more info: 978-350-2965

The Sacraments of Baptism & Confirmation were administered to:

Youssef & Tannous Bechara
Child of: David & Emily Beshara

"So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God, through faith, for all you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ"

Galatians 3:26-27

CONGRATULATIONS!

Entered into the Sacrament of Matrimony:

Nabil Bou-Mitri & Tamar Aroyan

"Confirm them in faith, hope, love and just deeds. Make their marriage as honorable as the marriages of the righteous and just of old."

Rite of the Covenant

MEDICAL DONATION DRIVE FOR LEBANON

JUST THINK OF THE LIFE YOU CAN SAVE

ESOMEPRAZOLE - LANSOPRAZOLE - OMEPRAZOLE
PANTOPRAZOLE - MAALOX - ASPIRIN 81MG - NAPROXEN
LORATADINE - FLUTICASONE NASAL - NASACORT NASAL
COUGH SYRUP KIDS AND ADULTS - COBALIN B12 - CALCIUM
VITAMIN D - KIDS VITAMINS GUMMIES- IRON- VITAMIN B
COMPLEX - VITAMIN C GLUCOSAMINE MSM - RANTIDINE
HOT & COLD PACKS - FIRST AID KITS - ACCU CHECK
PERFORMA/GUIDE STRIPS - GLOVES

ANY MEDICATION YOU CAN DONATE IS APPRECIATED

ORGANIZER : GEORGE MATTA
MYA NEW ENGLAND COORDINATOR
GSM2296@GMAIL.COM
774-365-1934



St. Monica School, Christmas Fair

Saturday, November 19th 9AM-6PM

St. Monica School Hall,
212 Lawrence Street, Methuen, MA

*Featuring: Games, Raffles, Sweets, Country Kitchen
and Santa's Workshop*



- Yours is the first of Christ's faces to greet God's people as they assemble for prayer.
- Yours is the word that welcomes the stranger to be at home.
- Yours is the task of discretion: knowing how to welcome, & when and where to seat the latecomer.
- Yours is the Lord's face and voice.
- Assist in passing the collection baskets
- Help the Communion flow
- Assist those who become ill or need aid
- Distribute bulletins & other materials
- After mass area check

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Nov. 12: Christopher Harb, Richard Mallen,
Elias Zaarour

Nov. 13: Diane Hatem, Paul Iannucchillo,
Alexis Iannucchillo, Tori Maroon, Stephanie
Sader, Naaman Sader, Melissa Tarness

Nov. 14: Cynthia Bonanno, Anthony Chamoun,
Addyson Plouffe, David Veilleux,

Nov. 15: Melhem Azzi, Katy Kalil, Eden Sfeir,

Nov. 16: Andrew Archambault, Logan Gabriel,
Leila Hassan

Nov. 17: Natasha Hashem, Joseph Saba, Serena
Uliano, Pascal Zaarour,

Nov. 18: Chaouki Bouchrouche, Fadi Francis,
Amale Chantiri, Andrew Debrowski

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Nov. 12: Muhenad & Grace Samaan

Nov. 13: Alex & Ciara Shepherd, Waroujian &
Genevieve Yeremian

Nov. 14: Samer & Diana Geha

Nov. 15: Bradford & Paula Brooks

Nov. 16: Douglas & Elizabeth DeVeau



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17

9:30 - 11:00 AM | 6:30 - 8:00 PM

*Come meet our faculty and administrators,
see our classrooms, tour the campus, talk
with current parents, and more!*

*Forming Saints and Scholars
since 1914*



LECTORS SCHEDULE

Saturday, November 12 - 4PM -Lisa Abdallah

Sunday, November 13- 8AM - Mouna Hbaiter

9AM - David Brousseau

11:00AM Eng: Mary Saab

Ar: George Saab

Saturday, November 19 - 4PM -

Patricia Ferguson

Sunday, November 20- 8AM - Hitaf Nammour

9AM - Elaine Ferris

11:00AM Eng: John El Helou

Ar: Sub-Deacon Antoine Nammour

St Anthony-Grave Purchase & Burial

Grave Purchase—*For Active Parishioners

- Grave Purchase–Double Depth: \$1900 (*one time fee*)
 - Perpetual Care: \$200 (*one time fee*)
- Total of Grave (Double Depth) Purchase: \$2100
- Memorial Stone Permit: \$75 (*one time fee paid upon installation*)

Burial Costs (Itemized)

- Opening and Closing (Summer Fees): \$1000
- Opening and Closing (Winter Burial): \$1,200
- Church Stipend: \$250
- Church Stipend (Wake in Church): \$450
- Soloist: \$150
- Organist: \$150
- Clergy Stipend: \$200 or left to the Family Discretion

Total of Burial Costs:

- Burial (Summer Fees): \$1,750
- Burial (Summer Fees-Wake in Church): \$1,950
- Burial (Winter Fees): \$1,950
- Burial (Winter Fees-Wake in Church): \$2,150

Prices are subject to change.

**Active Parishioners are considered those who have participated: Socially, spiritually and have contributed regularly in our database.*

Please take the time to review the complete cemetery guidelines by visiting our website www.stanthonylawrence.org/cemetery/

TREE OF LIFE

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES BY
PUTTING THEIR NAMES ON TREE OF LIFE
BRASS ALUMINUM PLAQUES SIZES:

1.5" X 3" = \$75 / 3" X 6" = \$150 /
4" X 8" = \$250

Please submit your request either by

Phone: 978.685.7233 or by E-mail:

rectory@stanthonylawrence.org

Looking for a Loved one buried at St Anthony's Cemetery?

1. Go to www.stanthonylawrence.org
2. Scroll to the bottom and click on BURIAL ONLINE SEARCH.
3. Type in the last/first name or in some cases just last name and click search.

CEMETERY LOT SALES & AVAILABILITY

St Anthony Cemetery offers affordable payment plans to fit any family's budget.

For more information:

By Phone (*During Office Hours*) 978-685-7233

Email rectory@stanthonylawrence.org

or Visit: www.stanthonylawrence.org/lots-sales/

Headstones & Cemetery Markers

Kindly review the information provided regarding acceptable dimensions per grave/lot on our website: <https://www.stanthonylawrence.org/lots-sales/>.

Please note: Double-Depth Graves are considered "One Grave Size"

DONATE A TREE IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE

Enhancing the beauty of Historic Saint Anthony Maronite Catholic Cemetery.

Plant-A-Tree A—

For a donation of \$400.00 : memorial plaque will be displayed by the tree for a period of ten years.

Plant-A-Tree B—

For a donation of \$250.00: memorial plaque will be displayed by the tree for the period of five years.

Your Donation is Tax-Deductible

Your contribution is tax deductible. You will receive a written acknowledgement of your donation from the Saint Anthony Maronite Catholic Cemetery.

If you like to donate a tree, please call the office at 978.685.7233 or email us at:

rectory@stanthonylawrence.org

Tree to be planted : Kousa Dogwood

Announcement to Zechariah

Book of Genesis 17,15-22.

God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.' Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, 'Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' And Abraham said to God, 'O that Ishmael might live in your sight!' God said, 'No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year.' And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

Letter to the Romans 4,13-25.

The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations') in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become 'the father of many nations', according to what was said, 'So numerous shall your descendants be.' He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith 'was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now the words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 1,1-25.

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed. In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense-offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' Zechariah said to the angel, 'How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years.' The angel replied, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.' Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, 'This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favourably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.'

أحد بشارة زكريا

سفر التكوين 17:15-22

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ: «سَارَى امْرَأَتُكَ لَا تُسَمِّيها سَارَى، بَلْ سَمِّيها سَارَةُ. وَأَنَا أَبَارِكُهَا وَأَرْزُقُكَ مِنْهَا ابْنًا وَأَبَارِكُهَا فَتَصِيرُ أُمًّا، وَمُلُوكٌ شُعُوبٌ مِنْهَا يَخْرُجُونَ». فَسَقَطَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ وَضَحَكَ، وَقَالَ فِي قَلْبِهِ: «الْإِنِّ مِئَةَ سَنَةٍ يُولَدُ وَلَدٌ، أَمْ سَارَةُ وَهِيَ ابْنَةُ تِسْعِينَ سَنَةً، تَلِدُ؟». فَقَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِلَّهِ: «لَوْ أَنَّ إِسْمَاعِيلَ يَحْيَا أَمَامَ وَجْهِكَ!». فَقَالَ اللَّهُ: «بَلْ سَارَةُ امْرَأَتُكَ سَتَلِدُ لَكَ ابْنًا وَسَمِيهِ إِسْحَاقَ، وَأَقِيمَ عَهْدِي مَعَهُ، عَهْدًا أَبَدِيًّا، لِأَكُونَ لَهُ إِلَهًا لِنَسْلِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ. وَأَمَّا إِسْمَاعِيلُ فَقَدْ سَمِعْتَ قَوْلَكَ فِيهِ. وَهَاءَ نَذَا أَبَارِكُكَ وَأَنْمِيهِ وَأَكْثِرْهُ جَدًّا جَدًّا، وَيَلِدْ اِثْنَيْ عَشَرَ رَئِيسًا، وَأَجْعَلْهُ أُمَّةً عَظِيمَةً. غَيْرَ أَنَّ عَهْدِي أَقِيمُهُ مَعَ إِسْحَاقَ الَّذِي تَلِدُهُ لَكَ سَارَةُ فِي مِثْلِ هَذَا الْوَقْتِ مِنَ السَّنَةِ الْمُقْبِلَةِ. فَلَمَّا أَنْهَى اللَّهُ مِنْ مُخَاطَبَةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، ارْتَفَعَ عَنْهُ.

رسالة القديس بولس إلى أهل رومة 4:13-25

يَا إِخْوَتِي، الْوَعْدُ لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ أَوْ لِنَسْلِهِ بَأْنْ يَكُونَ وَارِثًا لِلْعَالَمِ، لَمْ يَكُنْ بِوَاسِطَةِ الشَّرِيعَةِ، بَلْ بِالْبِرِّ الَّذِي نَالَهُ بِالْإِيمَانِ. فَلَوْ كَانَ أَهْلُ الشَّرِيعَةِ هُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ، لَأَبْطَلَ الْإِيمَانُ، وَأُلْغِيَ الْوَعْدُ؛ لِأَنَّ الشَّرِيعَةَ تُسَبِّبُ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ؛ وَحِينَئِذٍ لَا شَرِيعَةَ، فَلَا تَعْدِي لِلشَّرِيعَةِ. لِذَلِكَ فَأَهْلُ الْإِيمَانِ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ، لِكَيْ تَكُونَ الْوَرِاثَةُ هِبَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ. وَهَكَذَا تَحَقَّقَ الْوَعْدُ لِكُلِّ نَسْلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، لَا لِلنَّسْلِ الَّذِي هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّرِيعَةِ فَحَسَبَ، بَلْ أَيْضًا لِلنَّسْلِ الَّذِي هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْإِيمَانِ، إِيْمَانِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، الَّذِي هُوَ أَبٌ لَنَا أَجْمَعِينَ؛ كَمَا هُوَ مَكْتُوبٌ: «إِنِّي جَعَلْتُكَ أَبًا لِأُمَمٍ كَثِيرَةٍ». فَإِبْرَاهِيمُ الَّذِي آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ هُوَ أَبٌ لَنَا أَمَامَ اللَّهِ، الَّذِي يُحْيِي الْأَمْوَاتَ، وَيَدْعُو غَيْرَ الْمَوْجُودِ إِلَى الْوُجُودِ. وَقَدْ آمَنَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَاجِيًا عَلَى غَيْرِ رَجَاءٍ، بِأَنَّهُ سَيَصِيرُ أَبًا لِأُمَمٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، كَمَا قِيلَ لَهُ: «هَكَذَا يَكُونُ نَسْلُكَ». وَلَمْ يَضْعُفْ بِإِيمَانِهِ، بَرَّغَمَ أَنَّهُ رَأَى، وَهُوَ أَبْنٌ نَحْوِ مِئَةِ سَنَةٍ، أَنَّ جَسَدَهُ مَاتَ، وَأَنَّ حَسَا سَارَةَ قَدْ مَاتَتْ. وَبِنَاءً عَلَى وَعْدِ اللَّهِ، مَا شَكَّ وَلَا تَرَدَّدَ، بَلْ تَقَوَّى بِالْإِيمَانِ، وَمَجَّدَ اللَّهَ. وَأَيُّقِنْ مِلءَ الْيَقِينِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ أَنْ يُنْجِزَ مَا وَعَدَ بِهِ. فَلِذَلِكَ حُسِبَ لَهُ إِيْمَانُهُ بَرًّا. وَلَمْ يُكْتَبْ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ وَحْدَهُ أَنَّهُ «حُسِبَ لَهُ بَرًّا»، بَلْ كُتِبَ أَيْضًا مِنْ أَجْلِنَا، نَحْنُ الَّذِينَ سَيُحْسَبُ لَنَا بَرًّا، لِأَنَّنَا نُؤْمِنُ بِالَّذِي أَقَامَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْأَمْوَاتِ يَسُوعَ رَبَّنَا، الَّذِي أُسْلِمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ زِلَاتِنَا، وَأَقِيمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ تَبْرِيرِنَا.

إنجيل القديس لوقا 1:1-25

بِمَا أَنَّ كَثِيرِينَ أَخَذُوا يُرْتَّبُونَ رِوَايَةً لِلْأَحْدَاثِ الَّتِي تَمَّتْ عِنْدَنَا، كَمَا سَلَّمَهَا إِلَيْنَا مَنْ كَانُوا مُنْذُ الْبَدْءِ شُهُودَ عِيَانٍ لِلْكَلِمَةِ، ثُمَّ صَارُوا خُدَّامًا لَهَا، رَأَيْتُ أَنَا أَيْضًا، أَيُّهَا الشَّرِيفُ تِيُوفِيلُ، أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهَا لَكَ بِحَسَبِ تَرْتِيبِهَا، بَعْدَمَا تَتَبَعْتُهَا كُلَّهَا، مُنْذُ بَدَايَتِهَا، تَتَبُّعًا دَقِيقًا، لِكَيْ تَتَبَقَّ صِحَّةُ الْكَلَامِ الَّذِي وَعُظْتُ بِهِ. كَانَ فِي أَيَّامِ هِيرُودُسَ، مَلِكِ الْيَهُودِيَّةِ، كَاهِنٌ أَسْمُهُ زَكْرِيَّا، مِنْ فِرْقَةِ أَبِييَا، لَهُ امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ بَنَاتِ هَارُونَ أَسْمُهَا إِلِيصَابَاتُ. وَكَانَا كِلَاهُمَا بَارَيْنِ أَمَامَ اللَّهِ، سَالِكَيْنِ فِي جَمِيعِ وَصَايَا الرَّبِّ وَأَحْكَامِهِ بِلَا لَوْمٍ. وَمَا كَانَ لهُمَا وَلَدٌ، لِأَنَّ إِلِيصَابَاتَ كَانَتْ عَاقِرًا، وَكَانَا كِلَاهُمَا قَدْ طَعَنَّا فِي أَيَّامِهِمَا. وَفِيمَا كَانَ زَكْرِيَّا يُقُومُ بِالْخِدْمَةِ الْكَهْنُوتِيَّةِ أَمَامَ اللَّهِ، فِي أَثْنَاءِ نُوبَةِ فِرْقَتِهِ، أَصَابَتْهُ الْفُرْعَةُ، بِحَسَبِ عَادَةِ الْكَهْنُوتِ، لِيَدْخُلَ مَقْدِسَ هَيْكَلِ الرَّبِّ وَيُحْرِقَ الْبُخُورَ. وَكَانَ كُلُّ جُمُهورِ الشَّعْبِ يُصَلِّي فِي الْخَارِجِ، فِي أَثْنَاءِ إِحْرَاقِ الْبُخُورِ. وَتَرَاءَى مَلَاكُ الرَّبِّ لَزَكْرِيَّا وَاقِفًا مِنْ عَنِّ يَمِينِ مَذْبَحِ الْبُخُورِ، فَأَضْطَرَبَ زَكْرِيَّا حِينَ رَأَاهُ، وَاسْتَوَلَى عَلَيْهِ الْخَوْفُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلَاكُ: «لَا تَخَفْ، يَا زَكْرِيَّا، فَقَدْ اسْتَجِيبَتْ طِلْبَتُكَ، وَأَمْرَاتُكَ إِلِيصَابَاتُ سَتَلِدُ لَكَ ابْنًا، فَسَمِّهِ يُوَحْنًا. وَيَكُونُ لَكَ فَرْحٌ وَابْتِهَاجٌ، وَيَفْرَحُ بِمَوْلَدِهِ كَثِيرُونَ، لِأَنَّهُ سَيَكُونُ عَظِيمًا فِي نَظَرِ الرَّبِّ، لَا يَشْرَبُ خَمْرًا وَلَا مُسْكِرًا، وَيَمْتَلئُ مِنَ الرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ وَهُوَ بَعْدُ فِي حَسَا أُمِّهِ. وَيَرُدُّ كَثِيرِينَ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَى الرَّبِّ إِلَهُهِمْ. وَيَسِيرُ أَمَامَ الرَّبِّ بِرُوحٍ إِبْلِيًّا وَقُوَّتِهِ، لِيَرُدَّ قُلُوبَ الْآبَاءِ إِلَى الْآبَنَاءِ، وَالْعَصَاةَ إِلَى حِكْمَةِ الْآبَرَارِ، فَيُهَيِّئَ لِلرَّبِّ شَعْبًا مُعَدًّا خَيْرَ إِعْدَادٍ». فَقَالَ زَكْرِيَّا لِلْمَلَاكِ: «بِمَاذَا أَعْرِفُ هَذَا؟ فَإِنِّي أَنَا شَيْخٌ، وَأَمْرَاتِي قَدْ طَعَنَتْ فِي أَيَّامِهَا!». فَأَجَابَ الْمَلَاكُ وَقَالَ لَهُ: «أَنَا هُوَ جِبْرَائِيلُ الْوَاقِفُ فِي حَضْرَةِ اللَّهِ، وَقَدْ أُرْسِلْتُ لَأَكَلِمَكَ وَأُبَشِّرَكَ بِهِذَا. وَهَذَا أَنْتَ تَكُونُ صَامِتًا، لَا تَقْدِرُ أَنْ تَتَكَلَّمَ، حَتَّى الْيَوْمَ الَّذِي يَحْدُثُ فِيهِ ذَلِكَ، لِأَنَّكَ لَمْ تُؤْمِنْ بِكَلَامِي الَّذِي سَيَتِمُّ فِي أَوَانِهِ». وَكَانَ الشَّعْبُ يَنْتَظِرُ زَكْرِيَّا، وَيَتَعَجَّبُ مِنْ إِبْطَائِهِ فِي مَقْدِسِ الْهَيْكَلِ. وَلَمَّا خَرَجَ زَكْرِيَّا، لَمْ يَكُنْ قَادِرًا أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُمْ، فَأَذْرَكُوا أَنَّهُ رَأَى رُؤْيَا فِي الْمَقْدِسِ، وَكَانَ يُشِيرُ إِلَيْهِمْ بِالْإِشَارَةِ، وَبَقِيَ أَبْكَمَ. وَلَمَّا تَمَّتْ أَيَّامُ خِدْمَتِهِ، مَضَى إِلَى بَيْتِهِ. وَبَعْدَ تِلْكَ الْأَيَّامِ، حَمَلَتْ أَمْرَأَتُهُ إِلِيصَابَاتُ، وَكَتَمَتْ أَمْرَهَا خَمْسَةَ أَشْهُرَ، وَهِيَ تَقُولُ: هَكَذَا صَنَعَ الرَّبُّ إِلَيَّ، فِي الْأَيَّامِ الَّتِي نَظَرْتُ إِلَيْ فِيهَا، لِيُزِيلَ الْعَارَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ بَيْنِ النَّاسِ!.

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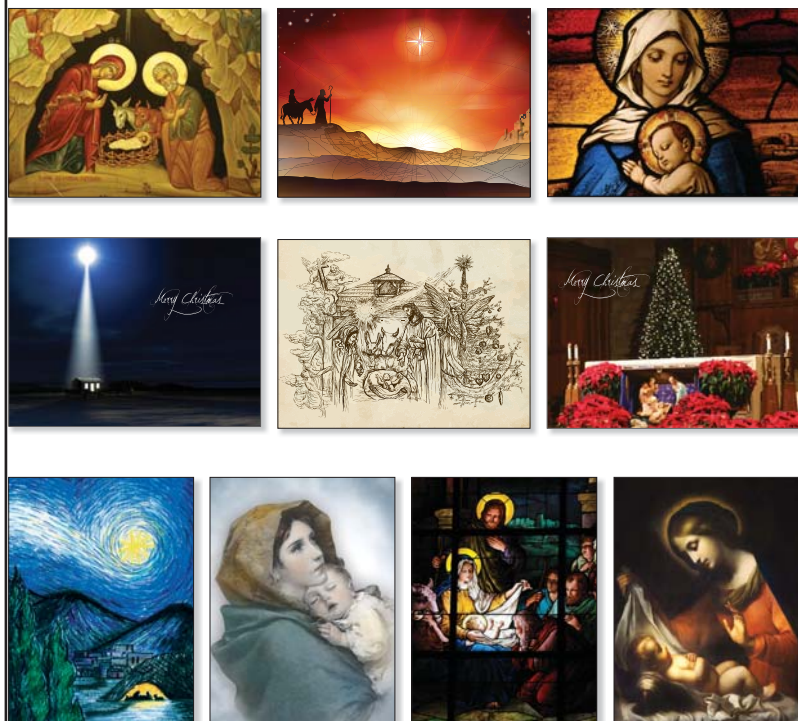


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